

## "Safety First" Officers Face House Inquiry

Members Stirred by Swelling Number of Commissions Granted

Clerks Now Arrayed In Army Uniforms

Staff of Non-Fighters Said to Exceed Actual Military Men

By Ralph Block

WASHINGTON, March 18.—The Congressional spotlight is expected to turn shortly on what Washington is beginning to call the safety first uniform. There have been rumblings for some time, largely in the House, over the swelling number of commissions granted in Washington to men whose qualifications for the army are not technical or military, but solely political or social. A week ago a lively dialogue in the House revealed that some War Department clerks have more than doubled their salaries by going into uniform with rank, and that persons on the House payroll, appointed by members, have been equally able to place themselves in the commissioned personnel of the War Department.

A member of the Naval Affairs Committee of the House predicted today that the storm would break soon in the House, although he declined to say by what channel the matter would come to the fore. Political fear of one kind or another—fear of offending persons who may have profited by the present system of granting commissions, or fear of disclosing to the nation what has been happening in Washington—has been operating in the past to keep the matter from open discussion.

### Non-Fighters Exceed Fighters

It is known, however, that figures have been presented to the Military Affairs Committee of the House putting the number of staff officers in the United States army at more than equal to the number of line or fighting officers. The figures show that the line personnel is 22,000 and the staff personnel 23,000. How many of these are in Washington and how many of them are untrained civilians, whose only relationship to the great work of war is a uniform and a commission, only the adjutant general and the Military Affairs Committee of the House know.

House Secretary Baker announced that no more commissions would be granted in the War Department unless to men whose technical qualifications were such as to make them eligible for extraordinary value to the military machine. For a brief time it appeared that the new ruling was being enforced, but in time the bars were let down and the number of commissions granted to men merely for clerical service in Washington began to swell again.

A House member declared today that the House would take action on the matter soon, however it might come up.

### "Army Register" Makes Protest

"We'll make the safety-firsters either take off their uniforms, go to France to fight, or else tag themselves with the 'safety first' tag," said a member of the House, who is actually going to fight. In Canada the men in non-combat uniforms are scarcely allowed in the service clubs any longer, and I hear that the real army men of Washington are getting near the same point. It's a shame the way they go over the top every morning to their offices in the War Department, when men in the same uniform are dying for them in France. At least, they ought to be marked so that folks will know who did the real fighting and who didn't.

An editorial in "The Army and Navy Register" of last Saturday's issue, and marked "Too Many Uniforms in Washington," said in part:

"It has been suggested that some uniform should be adopted for such officers and men other than that worn by the fighting personnel. One member suggested that the 'safety first' brigade should either be sent to the front or lose their uniforms. It was shown that the practice is very general, and many hundreds of men have been appointed in the enlisted grades and as officers with rank as high as majors in the army, who are detailed to clerical work, with not the slightest intention that they will ever see a day's 'real military service.'"

Just what proportion of the commissions granted in Washington have gone to men in draft age and otherwise exempt from active service is not clear. Congressmen who are interested in the matter show no disposition to deny that some of the men commissioned are valuable and have been given military rank because they bring expert advice and experience of military life to the army. It is known, on the other hand, that some of the lieutenant colonels in the War Department are doing before the war as civilians, and at a lower salary than they receive now as officers.

### House Inquiry Appears Certain

A few weeks ago it was understood that the War Department intended that some of the clerical officers from Washington to France, in order to forestall criticism of the practice, this in the House brought out the objection that the result would be disastrous to the trained soldiers at the front. It was pointed out that the men who had not even gone through the training camps. An army, however, even on the front, can only be employed in the part of the actual fighting, and a large part of its man power is utilized in the lines maintaining supply, etc. Possibly it is in his capacity that men who were commissioned in Washington for clerical work will be utilized.

The chief reason for an active interest in the matter in the House is that the House is considering appropriation bills for both the army and the navy. The navy appropriation bill reported out probably this week. The Military Affairs Committee is expected to have its bill ready in two or three weeks. The navy is believed to be free from the system of commissioning men who have no military training, although several cases were called to the attention of Secretary Daniels a few months ago.

Some members of the House are excited, and if an open survey of the matter does not come by committee action it may be taken to the President.

## Campaign Launched to Raise 2,000,000 Books for Our Troops Here and Abroad

Marines Wigwag Signal From Steps of Library That Opens Drive in Answer to Pershing's Call—Only Clean Literature Accepted

Four marines mounted the steps in front of the Public Library, at Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue, yesterday morning and wigwagged a signal to the crowd standing about. The signal was General Pershing's call to "Send Books" and the ceremony on the library steps was the opening of New York's campaign to help raise 2,000,000 books for American soldiers in camps, hospitals and prisons here and abroad. The campaign, which is being conducted by the American Library Association, will continue throughout this week, and is being waged by every branch library in the United States.

"Give the books you like the best," is the slogan of the campaign. The Library Association wants only the best books in the English language, and those suitable for men of all kinds, classes and creeds. Files of "The Undertakers' Review," Ruskin's "Letters to Young Girls," and an entire series of Elsie Books, all of which were donated to the cause, were graciously declined yesterday.

Fiction is much needed, and poems, biography, history and travel are all popular with the men. Repeated calls come to the camp libraries for technical handbooks and textbooks on engineering, mechanics and sanitary engineering from the 4,000 men in the service who have left technical schools and universities in the midst of their courses. Guide books, atlases, and Bibles are popular. If any one has a "Guide to Berlin" the men will be glad to receive it.

General Pershing has asked for 100,000 books a month and it is to supply this need that the Library Association has designated this as "Give-a-Book" week. Books will be received at any library and at many clubs, hotels and other public stations. Boy Scouts will collect them if donors are unable to deliver them.

The American Automobile Association needs more motor cars for the first of its free trips to Camp Upton Sunday, March 21. Persons desiring to give their cars for this service should communicate with the Touring Bureau, A. A. A., 501 Fifth Avenue. Relatives of soldiers at Yaphank who wish to avail themselves of the transportation offer should mail applications to the same office. Please include the name of the soldier or soldiers you wish to visit.

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## Officials Plan for A. A. A.'s Guests Riding to Upton

Automobile Executive to Arrange for Reception of Soldiers' Relatives

Robert A. Valentine, a director of the War Camp Community Service of the War Department's Commission on Training Camp Activities, will confer with James A. Hemstreet, New York manager of the touring bureau of the American Automobile Association, today to make definite plans for the reception of the relatives of men at Camp Upton who take advantage of the A. A. A.'s offer of free Sunday transportation between the greater city and Yaphank.

"I expect to talk the plan over with Mr. Valentine to-morrow morning," said Mr. Hemstreet last night. "He will be in town, and we will outline definitely the reception at camp of those who make our first free run on Sunday, March 31."

"The Commission on Training Camp Activities has already indicated this movement. But it is necessary for us to work out definite plans for notifying the soldiers at camp of the prospective arrival of their relatives and to arrange to have them at one of the Young Women's Christian Association hostess houses at camp on the arrival of the cars."

"I have been unable to learn yet whether the kin of soldiers are permitted to meet with the boys on army fare right in the company streets. If this is not allowed under the army regulations Mr. Valentine is going to arrange for the folks to dine at light lunches at the hostess houses at a nominal cost."

More Cars Needed

The morning mail yesterday brought a large number of applications to the A. A. A. offices, 501 Fifth Avenue. Mr. Hemstreet made another call for additional cars. They are needed, he said, if the first run is to be a success. He urged that persons who desire to donate their cars for this patriotic service notify him at once.

An early morning caller was a lad of twelve, who asked that his sister and he be taken on the first trip to camp. His brother, who is at Yaphank, the boy explained, has been making his parents a monthly allotment of \$15 out of his soldier wage. In addition to that, he is carrying insurance and making payments on Liberty bonds.

Sylvia, the prize African turtle, was back in her luxurious pool at the Flower Show at the Grand Central Palace yesterday, surrounded by orchids and water lilies and her usual retinue of goldfishes. All that was left of her great adventure was a sad light in her eye and an irritated frown to her quarter-inch of shell. She snappily at the thought of goldfish when he suggested a little brace of rose water, and she turned away from her roanoid meal of green flies and ground grub salad. All the afternoon she lay moping on a flat rock, where the cool water trickled over her left shoulder, and even when P. W. Popp, her guardian, tickled her solicitously with his gold-fenced cane she did not stir.

"It's only a bad case of spring fever," said Mr. Popp, reassuringly to Manager Herrington. They were worried about Sylvia's health to the extent that they even thought of calling up Mrs. H. Darlington, out at Mamaronock, and asking her if they should take a prize turtle home.

"These here pampered animals," said Mr. Popp, "often long for the open when the spring breezes blow. It's a heritage from the time when they all lived in tropic swamps and caught their own green grubs."

Sylvia's little touch of spring fever wouldn't have mattered if she hadn't been worth a thousand dollars. It was important that they called out the entire force of Flower Show detectives to hunt for her all day Sunday. It was late Saturday night before she was missed, and there are many nooks and crannies in the rock grotto of Mrs. Darlington's exhibit where a turtle can hide, and no one paid any attention to the fact that she was not in the front puddle.

Then the search was delayed by the fact that Mr. Popp, who thought he understood Sylvia's psychology, decided that she must have become jealous of the African fly, which is the only other exhibit from the dark continent in the show, and had gone to nibble its flower stalks in the dark. Even when this theory was found to be a base slander and the search was broadened to take in the entire show, there were heartrending delays, owing to the difficulty of detecting a small, flat object like Sylvia in the recesses of rock gardens and orchid grottoes and palm jungle.

It was not until the show opened yesterday morning that Mr. Herrington, having found his elephant's tusk, was roaming around the garden in a last effort to find her, heard a little boy call

to his mother from the end of George Gould's war garden:

"Oh, mother," he said, "see the toad eating tomatoes!"

Woes of a Poor Turtle

It was an unrepentant turtle that was conveyed in a silk handkerchief back to her gilded puddle.

"My gawd!" she said, "can't a poor turtle ever see a little life? Do you think I want to spend all my young days with these cheap gilded fishes? With everybody calling on us girls to help with the war gardens, I thought to my bit, too, even if I am only a turtle. I thought it would be a great help if I kept the bugs off the tomato plants."

The embarrassed Mr. Popp did his best to explain to her that her job was to stay in the front puddle and talk to the visitors at the show about the Red Cross garden up on the second floor.

In the garden yesterday it was Italian Day, and the speakers were Captain d'Annunzio, son of the poet; Andrea de Seguro, of the Metropolitan Opera Company; Signorina Bernady and Miss Nancy Hanks.

The hostesses for the afternoon were Mrs. Harry Drury, Mrs. Newbold Leffler, Mrs. Walter Maynard, Mrs. Roy Edgar, Mrs. Kenne and Mrs. William Sawyer. Kenne is Army and Navy Day, with Sergeant Harold Wright and Bert Hall, of the Lafayette Escadrille, as the speakers.

Jersey Officers Promoted

CAMP MCLELLAN, Ala., March 18.—Two more New Jersey officers have been assigned to divisional posts, which materially increases the prominence of the National Guard unit from that state in the 29th Division, encamped here.

Major Jean Wolfe, of Newark, for eight years a member of the Guard Medical Corps, has been named divisional sanitary inspector to succeed Major J. Harry Ulrich, who has been promoted to lieutenant colonel and commands the sanitary train.

Captain Anthony Weiss, of Newark, succeeds Captain Charles P. Smiley, of Virginia, as commander of the 104th Trench Mortar Battery.

The command of the 11th Machine Gun Battalion has been turned over, however, to Major Joseph L. Davidson, of Baltimore. This is a New Jersey unit and formerly was commanded by Major Arthur Mackie, of Newark.

Try that HELP! WANTED AD in next Sunday's Tribune. You'll be pleasantly surprised the way it will pull.—Adv.

## Sergt. Maj. James Again Decorated As Cameras Click

Presentation Repeated So Movies Can Show It to World

May Reproduce Meet

Large Cities of Country Appeal for Military and Naval Carnivals

Passers-by in Union Square at 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon paused at the spectacle of the officer of the U. S. S. Recruit as if for action. A moment later a movie camera man climbed out of the hawthorn and adjusted his apparatus. The crowd grew and edged nearer.

Then a little company of khaki-clad men emerged and drew up before a very erect khaki-clad man and a little knot of women and officers. The very erect man started to speak, and presently a soldier in the waiting line detached himself and stepped forward. The crowd saw the very erect pin something on the other's coat. The onlookers were mystified, but they learned later that it was a repetition of the presentation ceremony on Sunday in Madison Square Garden when the Grand Military and Naval Meet of the 1st Canadian Division—the 31st foreign officer ever decorated by a foreign power on American soil—received the second highest award in the British army.

Presentation Reproduced

The whole affair came about quite suddenly. On Sunday when, by special permission of King George, Sergeant James received his medal for "conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty" during the early fighting in Flanders, Brigadier General Kenyon, of the British War Mission, remarked that it was a pity no photographers were present to make permanent record of so notable an incident in the history of the relationship of this country and Great Britain. Mrs. Howard W. Beal, vice-chairman of the committee on arrangements for the Grand Military and Naval Meet, was being staged for the benefit of the Women's Oversea Hospitals.

U. S. A. said nothing at the time, but she immediately got busy making arrangements. Early yesterday afternoon she brought them to completion.

And so it happened that General Kenyon, accompanied by his aid, Captain Edward Whitwell, Colonel W. J. Abbot, of the Anglo-Russian Commission; Major R. K. Laurie, of the Royal Artillery; and Major E. A. St. George, of the Canadian veterans, slipped into the subway and hurried down to the U. S. S. Recruit. Mrs. Beal and Mrs. Elizabeth Ryle Strang (representing the Grand Military and Naval Meet).

Unfortunately it was impossible to get Major General William A. Mann, who at the original presentation, especially represented the United States War Department. But aside from that all was complete. Captain Whitwell read off the terms of the order. General Kenyon made a brief speech and, while the crowd below gaped and wondered, history was re-made and duly recorded.

It is planned to exhibit the pictures of the ceremony, both in this country and Great Britain, in connection with war propaganda.

In the same cause, a movement is on foot looking to a repetition in other cities throughout the country of the big show New York has just seen. "I have seen military exhibitions in France, Germany and Italy," said Mrs. David Rale, of the National Woman's Suffrage Party, yesterday, "but I have never seen anything to equal in effect the exhibition at the Garden. It was the real thing, done in a professional way."

All day yesterday similar expressions poured in on the committee. "The best ever!" was the universal verdict, and again and again the demand was made that the show be repeated.

To-night Sergeant James, the newly decorated hero, will appear with Sir Frederick Black, British Consul, and Captain Edward Whitwell, of the British war mission, at a recruiting rally in Bayonne, N. J.

Mother's Letter

Posted at Upton

Note From Bereaved Parent

Cited as Model of Patriotism to America

CAMP UPTON, March 18.—Copies of a letter written to Major J. D. Whitham, commanding officer of the base hospital here, by Mrs. M. E. Jenkins, of Holladay, Tenn., mother of Regimental Sergeant Major William B. Jenkins, of the 304th Field Artillery, who died here recently after a long illness, were ordered posted in all the barracks in the camp to-day by General Johnson, the division commander.

The following comment was added to the order: "This letter will serve as a model of patriotism to the mothers of America, exemplifying as it does recognition of the national necessity, which transcends all personal and private interests."

The letter follows:

"Allow me, as one who has lived until I am now an old woman, to express to you my thanks and appreciation for your many courtesies to me as mother of Sergeant William B. Jenkins. I had hoped my boy would get his chance in France, but he did not, so I am as submissive to his death as if he had died in the trenches in Europe."

"Please accept my thanks for all your kindness and to any of his comrades that were with him in his sickness. With a sad heart I dictate these lines, but with a cheerful pulse and an accelerated heart I look forward to the day when victory shall come to the brave boys who are giving their lives for our beloved land. I shall ever love a soldier boy. May God's blessing be on you!"

Men in Merchant Marine

Exempted From Draft

BOSTON, March 18.—Men who enter the merchant marine training service of the United States Shipping Board will be exempted from the military draft, under a special ruling made public to-day by Henry Howard, director of recruiting here. Only American citizens are accepted.

Try that HELP! WANTED AD in next Sunday's Tribune. You'll be pleasantly surprised the way it will pull.—Adv.

## SERGEANT MAJOR A. W. JAMES, D. C. M.



## New Yorkers Commissioned

War Department Announces Reserve Corps Appointments

[Staff Correspondence]

WASHINGTON, March 18.—Reserve Corps commissions were issued to-day by the War Department to the following New York residents:

First Lieutenants, Medical Corps—Ronald M. Ferry, Presbyterian Hospital; Eben Van Rook, West 120th Street; Charles L. Weitz, Flower Hospital, and Charles G. Teresi, Longwood Hospital.

First Lieutenants, Quartermaster Corps, National Army—Carl A. Axelson, 720 Sixth Street, Brooklyn.

First Lieutenants, Sanitary Corps, National Army—Harry A. Dattelbaum, 1240 Centre Street, and Harry C. Myers, 1275 Union Street, Brooklyn.